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A MESSAGE

TO THE

Negro Disciples of Christ

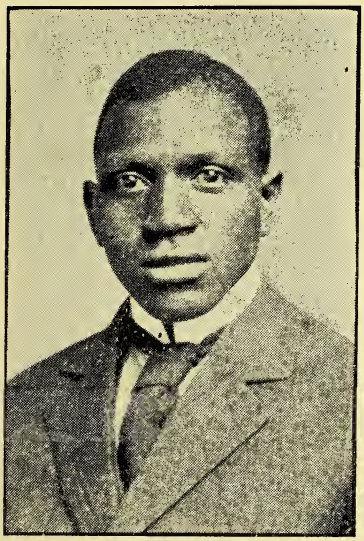
of Eastern North Carolina

By E. L. WHITFIELD

Editor-in-Chief The Argus, Biddle University

Charlotte, N. C.

Price, 25 Cents



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A SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

By Rev. O. J. Allen, Pastor of the Washington Baptist Church, Waco, N. C.

Near a quarter century ago there was born to Elder C. R. D. Whitfield and Mrs. Sarah R. Whitfield, a son, who was named Edgar Lapidoth, near Kinston, N. C.

Edgar Lapidoth Whitfield's life has been a school time. His father says that he entered school at about six years of age and has not missed a session since, attending from three to nine months a year.

He attended the public schools of Lenoir county and Kinston Graded School.

At an early age he connected himself with the church of Christ at Hickory Grove and was baptized by Elder A. H. Hargett, and since that time he has been faithfully working in the cause of Christ.

In 1903 he was a delegate to the Sunday School Assembly at Grifton, N. C., and acted as chairman of the committee on resolutions and constitution.

In 1904 he worked as book and photograph agent during his leisure time from the farm. The same year he was elected superintendent of Hickory Grove Sunday School and represented his school in the Assembly at Greenleaf, N. C., at which Assembly he was elected District Superintendent.

In 1905 he was a delegates to Sunday School Assembly at Vine Swamp and delivered the Educational address.

In this same year he worked as agent for the Household Novelty Works in South Carolina.

In September, 1905, this bright young man entered Biddle University, Charlotte, N. C., making the Senior class of the Normal Department and took a course in the printing department.

In June, 1906, he graduated from Biddle University Normal school and won the oratorical prize medal.

During the vacation he received a special letter from Rev. D. J. Sanders, D. D., L.L. D., the late President of Biddle, requesting him to come at once and take part in the renovation and embellishment of some of the college buildings, which he did immediately.

This afforded him a splendid opportunity of giving some practical knowledge of mechanical art and learning something of cementing and plastering.

In October, 1906, he marticulated in the school of arts and sciences of Biddle University.

Bro. Whitfield spent the summer of 1907 at home lecturing and preaching and represented the Columbia Publishing House, Chicago, Ill.

In 1907 he was elected General Sunday School Lecturer for Sunday Schools on the west side of Tar River.

In October, 1907, E. L. Whitfield was ordained an Elder in the Church of Christ, at Greenleaf, N. C., after which he returned to Biddle and resumed his studies and also went back to his first love, the printing office and has been there ever since, winter and summer.

In June, 1908, he was promoted to the mailing clerk position of the printing office and having proven himself to be so proficient along literary and journalistic lines Reporter for the Afro-American Presbyterian, and shortly afterwards he was elected Associate Editor of The Argus, Biddle University, Charlotte, N. C., and in May, 1909, was elected Editor in Chief of the same paper.

It has been my pleasure to know E. L. Whitfield for a number of years and have found him to be a man whose character is spotless and whose conscence is as clear as a crystal, a gentleman of refinement and of natural gifts and ability.

As a speaker he is graphic and eloquent.

As a printer and newspaper man he has proven to be second to none, considering his invironments.

As a preacher he is logical and practical.

In business he is prompt, exact and honest, and shows every indication of being an eminent and gifted teacher. At present he has had some experience in teaching. For the past two years he has been a private teacher in Algebra, Latin, English and Greek.

We can see many precious jewels in him, may God speed the young man on in the great and ardous work he is about to take up.

REV. J. O. ALLEN.

A MESSAGE TO THE COLORED DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA.

Introduction.

Homer, the great Grecian poet, was inspired to emplore the Heavenly Muse to sing the destructive wrath of Achilles, Virgil, the sweet singer of Rome's golden age in no less a degree invoked the goddess as he related the visissitudes of Aeneas.

God called Moses from a burning bush to lead his people from Egyptian bondage to the land of Promise.

Milton was inspired by some spirit invisable where he manifested the brilliancy of his imagination and expressed the depths of his thought in the wonderful production of those glorious and immortal epics, "Paradise Lost," and "Paradise Regained."

In like manner do I feel that I am called and inspired of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whose angels are spirits and whose ministers are flames of fire, to proclaim the insearchable riches of the gospel of truth—to disseminate the beneficient light of the faith that was "first delivered to the Saints"—to wield the pen in the interest of the doctrine and to vindicate the cause of a hated, downtrodden and struggling people—the Negro Disicples of Christ, of East North Carolina.

OBJECT.

During the past four years that I have been in Biddle University, the greatest Presbyterian College in the South for Negroes, preparing myself for life's usefulness, there has been much doubt felt on the part of the brethren as to my staying in the connection and adhering to the doctrine as it is taught by the Disciples of Christ. Many thought and said that the glitter of gold would

seduce me, or the tempting tide of passing fancies would wash me afloat on the sea of denominational uncertainty and the waves of proseleytism would carry me to some unknown shore, never to be heard of again as a Disciple of Christ.

But this booklet will show that such has not been the case. But, like Moses, I prefer to suffer affliction with the people of God. (The Disciples of Christ), than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

This booklet will also show that the author is now writing a history of the Disciples of Christ and solicits the aid of the church.

Its object is also to arouse the brotherhood to greater educational, industrial and normal activity.

To show the number of members in the larger Protestant churches in the United States and to give an idea of the extent of the church of Christ in the world and to give the number of Negro ministers in assemblies of the various States; also to show what progress the Negro Disciples of Christ of East North Carolina have made in the past ten years, and what they can do and must do in the future in order to raise to the desired height in the scale of civilization and to continue the onward march of Christianity towards the goal of its sacred mission.

MY PLEA, ADVICE AND EXHORTATION.

This age in which we live is one of materialism, competition and scholarship. An age of philosopical and scientifuic researches and discoveries and inventions and the like accomplishments and achievements such as the Air Ship, in which men sail about in the etherical blue like the birds in the air and the Wireless Telepraph, by which ships at sea exchange mutual greetings. Truly this is an age of great advancement in things social, civil and religious, indeed times are changing in rapid succession. "Things are not what they used to be."

Such being the conditon of the present age it behooves us to be up and doing.

Let me exhort you therefore, first of all to get the Grace of God in your heart and "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

Get an education and embelish it, get a piece of land and build a decent house, supply it and enjoy it.

Those of you in whose hands God has entrusted children, don't let them grow up in ignorance and superstition; give them an opportunity to learn something.

"Wisdom is the principle thing, therefore get wisdom; and in all your getting get understanding." Proverbs 4:7.

Buy for them good books and Christian literature. Get newspapers for them (such as the "Gospel Plea," at Edwards, Miss.)

By reading they can enrich their minds with golden thoughts, graceful and pure language from the priceless treasures of the store house of by gone ages, and thus some day they may be able to exalt you andto save your gray hairs from going down to the grave "unhonored unwept and unsung," but will be a living monument to perpetuate your sacred memory when your bones are moulding in the clay.

Teach your children to make friends with the white man and despise him not because of slavery.

Slavery was a blessing in disguise. It was nothing more than a plan of Him who knows all things, sees all things, and does all things well. Remember Longfellows immortal lines:

"Trust no future however pleasant!
Let the dead past bury its dead,
Act, act in the living present;
Heart within and God overhead."

This is the white man's country, the cattle that browse over a thousand hills are his, the railroads, telephones, telegraphs that stretch like a net work from the

tempestous shows of the Atlantic to he golden gates of the Pacific, and from the snow capped mountains of Canada to the sunny lands of Mexico, the books we read, the language we talk, these belong to the white man.

Show me one Negro college or school of any importance that is not supported by philanthropy—its white friends and I will show you 99 that are supported by the Northern white peole.

Watch the success of those who do that.

On the 14th of March, 1909, it was my privilege to be in the presence of and to talk with Prof. Booker T. Washington, A. M., L.L. D., Tuskegee's venerable president. Dr. Washington owes the success of his school largely to the support of its white friends. Take his example, go and do likewise.

It will be remembered that some years ago we attempted to conduct a newspaper at Plymouth, N. C., but for reasons better known to the brethren, it failed. A few years later we hurriedly and thoughtlessly went into the printing business without plans and without money. In this we were awfully flattered and ignomiously humiliated.

Let us profit by the mistakes and experiences of the past; looking before we leap; let us take timely consideration before entering any future enterprise or beginning any business transaction.

Let us strive to be the best. If you are a teacher don't be satisfied with just enough smattering of learning to teach a country school, but let all who can go through college, and if possible take a post graduate course, so as to be adequate to the passing demands of the passing hour. If a carpenter, be a mechanic, not a "jack leg;" if a preacher, be not a "Bible beater," but do as Paul commanded, "Study to show thyself approved unto God; a workman that needeth not to be ashamed; rightly dilivering the words of truth," Tim. 2:15.

In building churches don't frame up for the sacred house of worship (as so many do) something just large

enough to house a handful of feeble souls, but "Honor the Lord with your substance." Erect large and stately edifices, decorate them with fine seats and ornamental lamps, put carpet in the aisles, get large heaters and keep them polished. Natural philosophy teaches that a polished stove gives several times as much heat as an old rusty one. Paint your churches, for paint not only beautifies but saves the weather-boarding. All churches should have lofty steeples in which a sweet and loud-toned bell to call the little children from their recesses of play to the Sunday school, and to have the sinner wandering down the avenues of destruction leading to the charmber of death—the gates of hell; to touch his heart with a spark of celestial fire and center his mind on things heavenly, things devine.

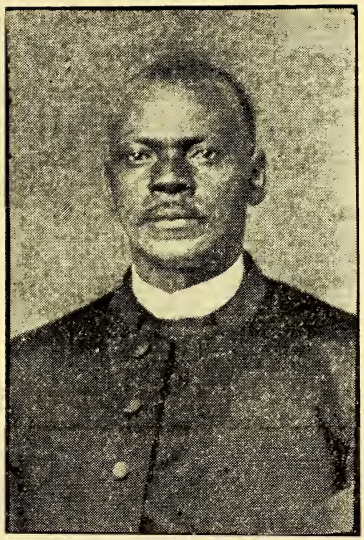
Establish in your churches choirs which shall sing praise to God. The Bible says, "Excell in the edifying of the church."

The Disciples of Christ have every reason to be proud when they recall that fact that some of the world's greatest men were members of their faith.

Benjamin Franklin, that great Editor, author, and philosopher, who discovered electricity, was a Disciple of Christ, and wrote many books to defend the doctrine.

James A. Garfield, that great and good President of the United States was a Disciple of Christ, and although he was shot because he walked in the way of all truth and stood up for justice and right.

We can hear resounding through the course of human events the distant echoes of his sacred voice crying, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."



ELDER C. R. D. WHITFIELD

Chief of the Eastern North Carolina Assembly of
The Disciples of Christ

PROGRESS MADE IN TEN YEARS.

Ten years ago the Negro Disciples of Christ of East North Carolina had only 65 churches and mission points, but now 100 stand as testimonials to their success.

Then we had only 78 preachers, now 116 Elders, some of which are high and shining stars in the constellation of the sacred ministry.

Ten years ago our pro-tempore treasurer reported only $86.65; last year he reported $442.82; then the assembly adjourned with only $202.24; last year the brethren did each other good rejoicing over the neat sum of $1,098.90 in treasury.

The membership then was only 3,374, but now nearly 6,000 are contending for the faith which was first delivered to the saints.

THE NEED OF A HISTORY OF THE NEGRO DISCIPLES OF CHRIST.

When we think of such men as Elders W. A. James, I. Dorden, B. J. Gregory, C. R. D. Whitfield, E. D. Hill, E. W. Warren, H. C. Speller, I. V. Keys, J. F. Keys, A. H. Hargett, Dennis Spencer, B. J. Shaw, J. C. Corden, Sr., T. J. A. McLaurin, P. H. Howell and W. P. Steeley. and such prominent laymen as Bros. J. H. Battle, J. C. Corden, Sr., W. R. James, B. F. Simmons and Prof. J. B. Lehman, Ph. B., president of the Southern Christian Institute and editor in chief of the Gospel Plea, Edwards, Miss., and Prof. A. J. Thompson, A. M., president of Louisville Christian Bible School, Louisville, Ky., Prof. J. H. Thomas, A. B., principal of Martainville Christian Institute, Martinsville, Va., and many others too numerous to mention. When we think of these, we repeat then we sound the alarm that a history is needed to show us what we are doing and to show others what we are do-

ing and to hand down the deeds of our fathers to generations yet unborn.

So I ask the unanimous aid and ardent prayers of the church as I take up so great a task—as I undertake so vast a responsibility.

THE NUMBER OF NEGRO ELDERS IN THE VARIOUS STATES.

Belonging with the Disciples of Christ, Alabama, 27; Arkansas, 16; Florida, 10; Georgia, 8; Illinois, 3; Indiana, 2; Kansas, 25; Kentucky, 27; Louisiana, 2; Maryland, 1; Mississippi, 17; Missouri, 55; Nebraska, 1; North Carolina, (3 assemblies), 153; Ohio 8; Oklahoma, 3; South Carolina, 55; Tennessee, 48; Texas, 45; Virginia, 12.

NUMBER MEMBERS OF THE LARGER PROTESTANT CHURCHES.

Catholics, (including their families,) 12,394,731; Methodist, 6,838,779; Baptists, 5,413,945; Lutherans, 2,082,766; Presbyterians, 1,831,854; Disciples of Christ, 1,295,423; Protestant Episcopalians, 898,972.

The Disciples of Christ are established in the United States, Africa, China, Japan, Cuba, England, Hawaii, Islands, India, Philippines, Scanadanvia, Tibet, Jamaica, Mexco , Porto Rico, Argentine Republic, Canada and Australia.